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Recent Posts

[Interview] Part4: Barb Bowman - Top Five Tips in Wireless and Devices

[Interview] Part3: Barb Bowman - Top 6 Challenges with Wireless Technology

[Guest Blogger] Riding to the "Surface"

[Interview] Part2: Barb Bowman - Wireless Best Practices

[Interview] Part1: Barb Bowman - Critical Issues for Organizations; IT Professionals Making a Difference

Tags

Adam Cole Barnaby Jeans BizTalk Blaine Bey Career Tips **CC Blogged Down** CIPS Collaboration Community DavidCarbi DJ Dinkley Don Spencer **Downloads** Energize IT **Events** Graham Jones Guest **Bloggers** Industry Perspectives **Interviews** IT Alignment **IT Manager Interviews** IT Manager PodcastSeries Jacqueline Hutchinson Jing Chen Use Services Mitch Tulloch **MS News** NewsWire Partners Podcasts Ruth Morton Sea O'Driscoll Security **Stephen Ibaraki** Tools & Utilities **Training** Val Watson Wireless Technology

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Ruth Morton IT Pro Advisor
Microsoft Canada

[Interview] Part 5: Teresa Hennig, International MS Access Authority

This is the next blog in the [continuing series](#) of interviews with leading professionals. In this series of blogs, I have an exclusive interview with Teresa Hennig. Teresa is an international authority on MS Access, a top user group leader, a best selling author and a recognized and profiled MVP.

Enjoy! Stephen Ibaraki, [FCIPS](#), [I.S.P.](#), [MVP](#)

Motivation



Stephen: You spend a lot of time and energy supporting your groups. What is the biggest motivator for you?

Teresa: That's an easy answer. The ability to empower affords a feeling like no other. I feel extremely fortunate to be able to create opportunities for my members and colleagues that they would otherwise would not have had. And, it isn't just my direct contacts because the members are taking the meeting material into the community and helping others as well. For example, one of the members drives 4 hours round trip, but he uses our meeting content as the foundation for the college classes that he teaches. I'm sponsoring another user group in Oregon, and they use my newsletter instead of creating their own. There are incredible success stories of people who joined the group not even knowing how to create a database but in a few years progressed to being database administrators and independent consultants.

I also work with sponsors so that members receive software that many otherwise could not afford. There have been several meetings at which we were able to give out several thousand dollars worth of software. I am just finalizing discussions that will provide the members of my groups and others a significant discount on laptops, PCs, RAM and other upgrades. Given the immediate need to upgrade to enjoy the full power of Vista, this is a huge benefit to my membership and the community.

But, some of the most memorable times have been from being the lead author on books. I have been able to invite people that I know to become authors and contributors to highly acclaimed reference books. This kind of credibility and visibility is something that you just can't buy. It was my privilege to invite my good friend Amen Stein, to join me as co-author for our 2003 edition. But, maybe the most memorable response was last year, from Rob Cooper: how many times does a person get to "make someone's dream come true."

So, my real motivator is knowing that I really am making a difference.

Tips for Producing Live Webcasts

Stephen: You are the project leader for INETA Live Webcasts serving over 800 user groups and 450,000 members. What are the key tips that you can share for producing live webcasts?

Teresa: First and foremost, it takes a team to run a webcast. So, have everyone take some time to get familiar with the tools and technology. Some webcast services require that slides be uploaded to a website, others use a desktop sharing technology so the presenter is merely working from their own computer. Either way, the presenter needs to learn about and be comfortable using various tools, such as the white board, the highlighters, taking polls, switching controls and even adding a slide to the presentation.

The host will need to be comfortable with moderating the presentation, watching for questions, coordinating things in the background, and know the benefit from taking polls, using the whiteboard, and being able to step in to go through slides when necessary.

If you have a conference call, the call coordinator needs to know how to disconnect lines, how to mute callers and how to turn off announcements. Then after the webcast, you'll need someone to edit the recording and arrange for it to be published for on-demand viewing.

Like David, it takes a team.



John Osley Director Community Evangelism
Morogoff Canada



like I said, it takes a team.

Another challenge is to line up presenters and topics. You'd think that this would be a piece of cake and that people would be falling over each-other for the opportunity. But, that isn't the case, at least not for INETA. I am always seeking presenters to share expertise to help user group leaders. It is surprisingly difficult to even get 8 presentations scheduled in a year. So, maybe some of your readers will want to seize the day. I'd welcome their email, Tereas.Hennig@INETA.org. Let's see, to turn that into a tip, I'd say to create a schedule and try to get people to sign up 2 to 3 month's in advance. If you don't have a presenter, contact some user group leaders or established presenters and see if they have an interesting topic that is ready to go. Many presenters can re-purpose a talk that they prepared for a conference or other meeting.

Another tip is to get the word out early and then again just before the webcast. Put notices on the group's website, in the newsletter and on any sites with which you have reciprocal agreements. Ask people to pre-register. With some services, this will automatically trigger a reminder email shortly before the webcast, if it doesn't, be sure to send them yourself. Offer a draw item and select the winner from those who complete a survey at the end of the webcast. This is, of course, another benefit of networking. Because you can invite a company to sponsor the draw and give them some publicity in the announcements as well as on the slide leading to the survey. Plus, a nice prize may be just the extra incentive it takes to get more people to participate. Remember, success leads to success. You may have to work hard to get attendance at the first webcast. But, if you keep at it and schedule them consistently, word-of-mouth will help recruit participants.

Archives

June 2007 (12)

May 2007 (24)

April 2007 (20)

March 2007 (14)

February 2007 (21)

January 2007 (18)

December 2006 (4)

November 2006 (18)

October 2006 (16)

September 2006 (23)

August 2006 (26)

July 2006 (26)

June 2006 (36)

May 2006 (28)

April 2006 (30)

March 2006 (38)

February 2006 (41)

January 2006 (26)

December 2005 (28)

November 2005 (8)

October 2005 (8)

September 2005 (2)

August 2005 (7)

Look for more with Teresa in the next blog.

I also encourage you to share your thoughts here on these interviews or send me an e-mail at sibaraki@cips.ca.

Posted: Friday, May 18, 2007 8:05 AM by [cdnitmgr](#)

Filed under: [Stephen Ibaraki](#), [Interviews](#)

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